BPS – COHORT 27

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7. Understanding the Basic Function of ACC Devices

After reading Augmentative & Alternative Communication, I believe communication device users have functional communication. According to a 1997 Census Bureau report less than 10% of severely disabled individuals were employed. Despite the various barriers to employment, some AAC users achieve success in educational endeavors and employment, though often in lower paying jobs.[[104]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augmentative_and_alternative_communication#cite_note-Hamm.2C_B._2006-103)[[105]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augmentative_and_alternative_communication#cite_note-104) Factors that have been found to be related to employment are a strong [work ethic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Work_ethic) and access to AAC technology, the support of family and friends, education, and work skills.[[106]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augmentative_and_alternative_communication#cite_note-McNaughton.2C_D._Light_2002-105) Individuals with ALS who use AAC may continue working; factors supporting continued employment include access to AAC, support from employers, governmental programs and others.[[107]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augmentative_and_alternative_communication#cite_note-McNaughton.2C_D._Light_2001-106) Employers of AAC users report that skills in [time management](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_management), [problem solving](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Problem_solving), communication, technology and a good education are important to employers.

Several studies of young adults who had used AAC since childhood report a generally good quality of life, though few lived independently, or were in paid employment.[[104]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augmentative_and_alternative_communication#cite_note-Hamm.2C_B._2006-103)[[109]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augmentative_and_alternative_communication#cite_note-lundlight1-108) The young adults used multiple modes of communication including aided and unaided AAC approaches.[[104]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augmentative_and_alternative_communication#cite_note-Hamm.2C_B._2006-103)[[110]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augmentative_and_alternative_communication#cite_note-lundlight2-109) More positive quality of life outcomes often correlated with better quality of communication and interaction, as well as personal characteristics, family and community support, and excellent AAC services.[[104]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augmentative_and_alternative_communication#cite_note-Hamm.2C_B._2006-103)[[109]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augmentative_and_alternative_communication#cite_note-lundlight1-108)[[111]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augmentative_and_alternative_communication#cite_note-lundlight3-110) Poorer outcomes were related to lack of access to appropriate AAC supports and resources, problems with technology and negative attitudes[104][111

There are different forms that we communicate and different levels of communication, based on the individual’s needs; motor, visual, cognitive – strength and weaknesses. Everyone can communicate! Functional communication is the ability to receive or convey a message, regardless of the mode, to communicate effective and independently in any given environment, according to the American Speech & Language – Hearing Association. Functional communication is speaking and being understood. Functional communication is having the ability to improve language skills and quality of life.